

Conserving Heritage Value through Repair and Maintenance (R&M) at The Tower of London

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CONTEXT

R&M of Heritage Sites

- Heritage sites aim to communicate significance and value to the public and R&M is vital for this as it helps to keep sites up-to-date and functional
- Literature suggests that R&M is therefore a mechanism for achieving heritage values
- However, tensions exist between the two value systems: R&M and heritage values. Figure 1 provides a visual representation of these interactions.

Figure 1

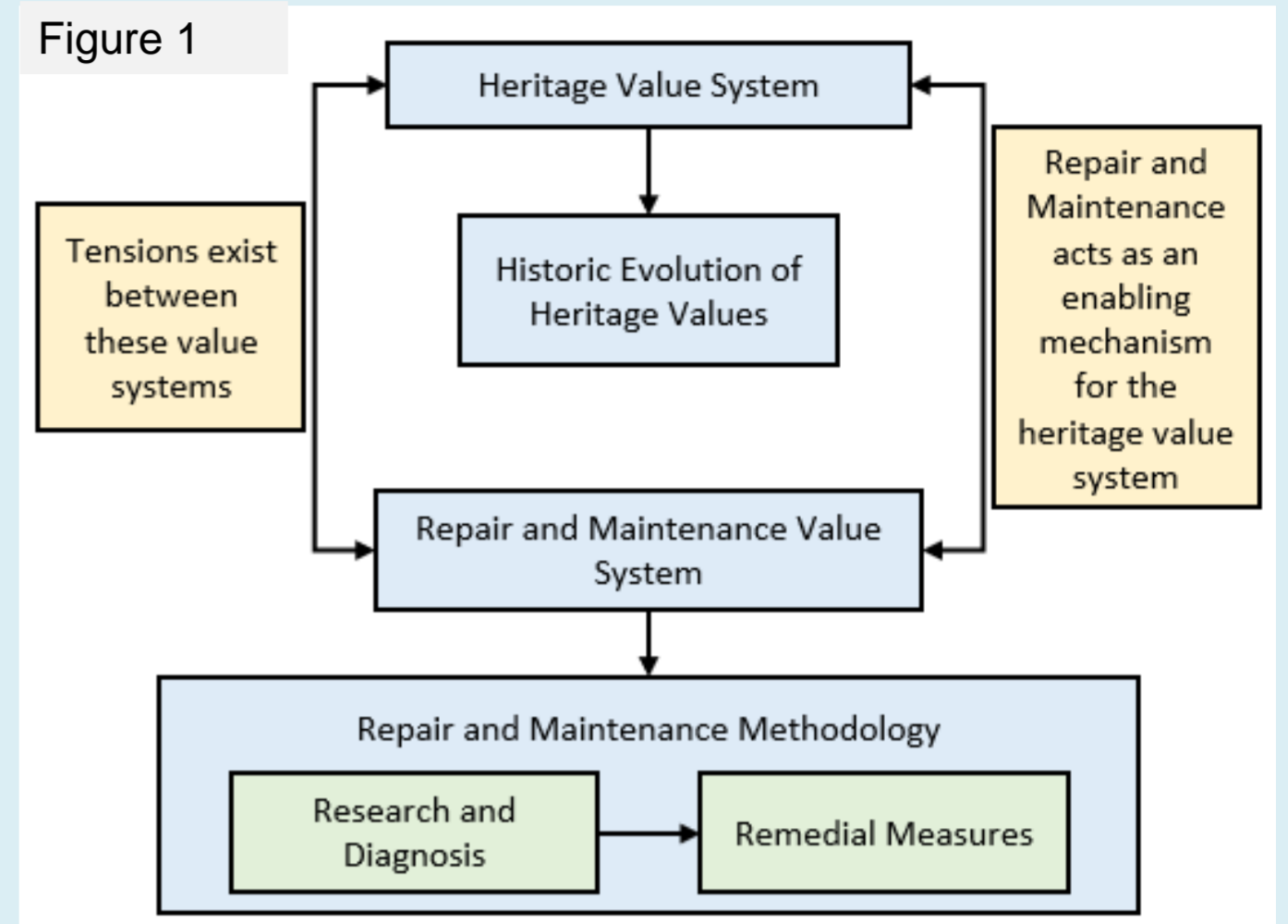
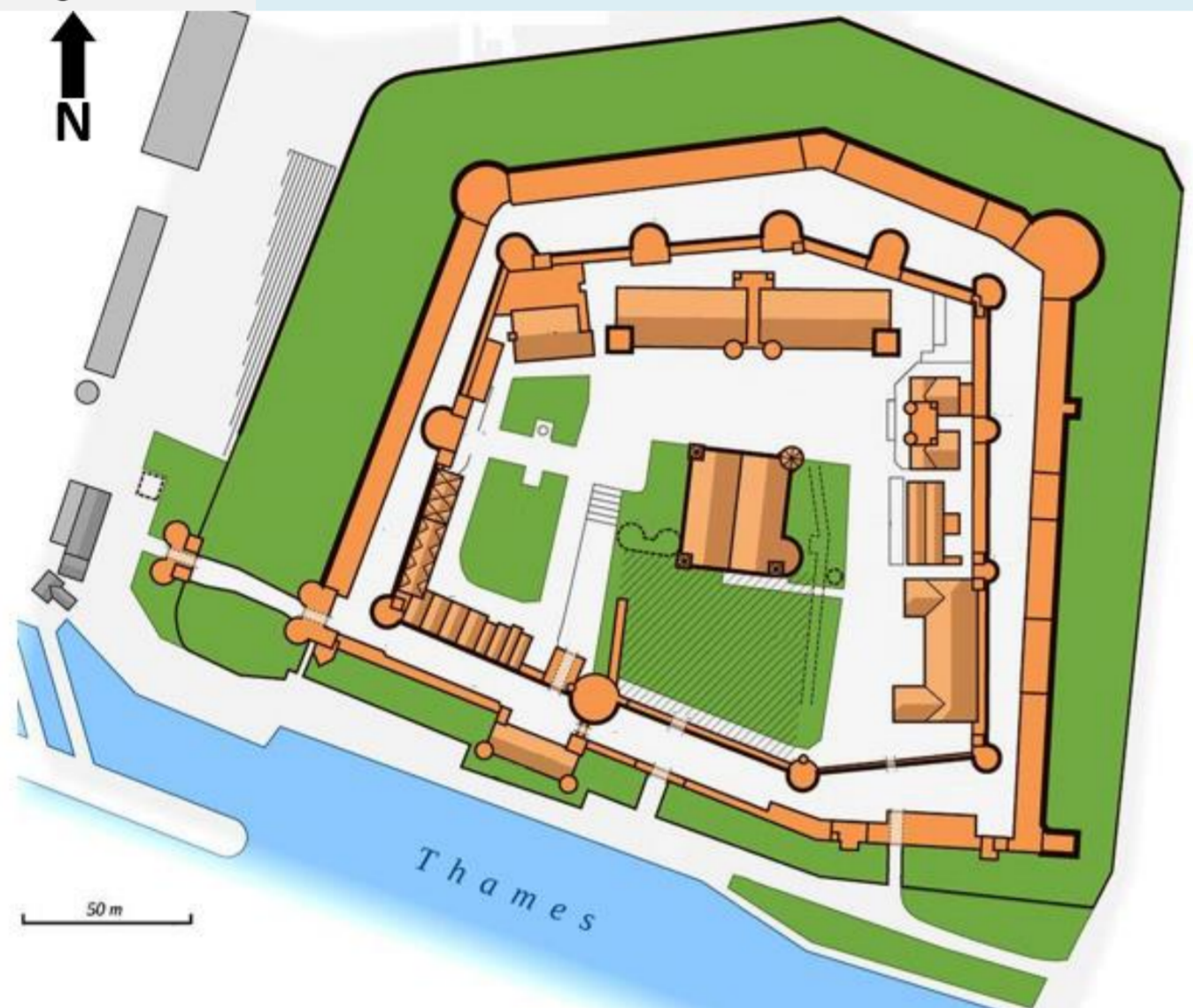


Figure 2



The Tower of London (TTofL)

- TTofL (figure 2) is a UNESCO World Heritage Site; Scheduled Ancient Monument; Site of Special Scientific Interest and it contains statutorily listed buildings.
- Outstanding Universal Value is designated based on criterion two (symbolic of royal power) and criterion four (example of medieval military architecture).
- It is one of England's most popular tourist attractions, accommodating over 2.8 million visitors per year.

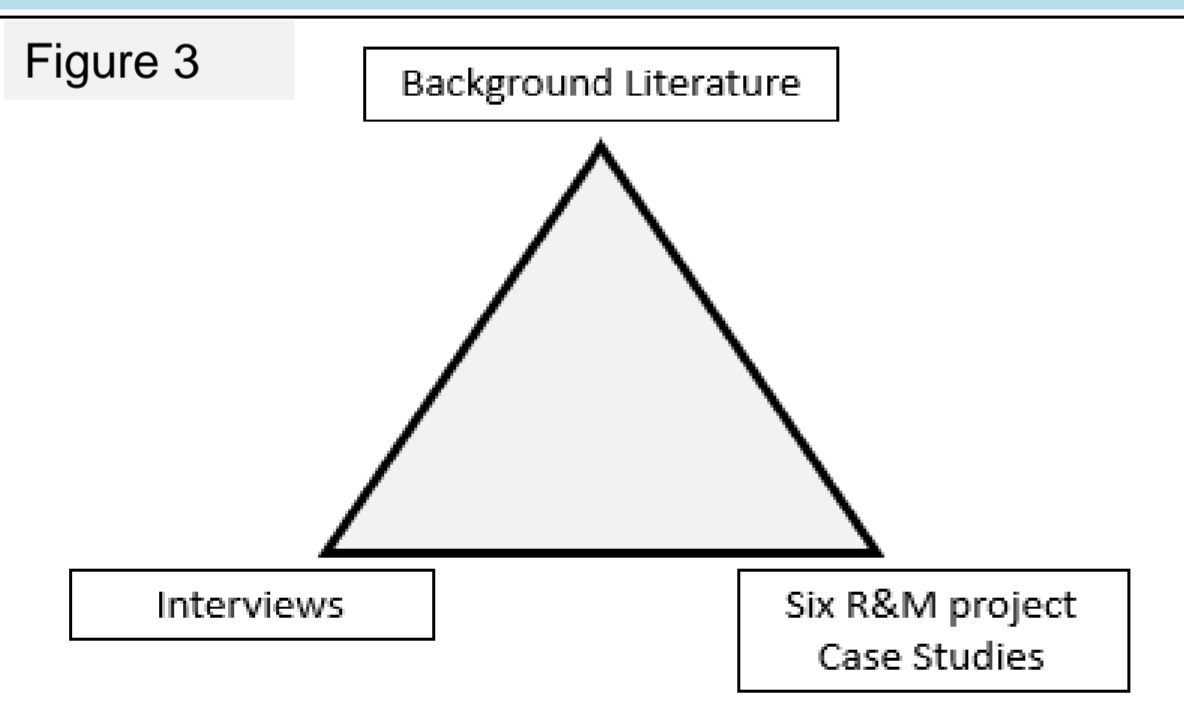
Research Aim

To explore the way that heritage values and R&M values interact at TTofL and how potential tensions are mitigated when carrying out R&M at this site.

METHODS

Methodological triangulation (figure 3) including:

- Literature Review (summarised in figure 1)
- Semi-structured interviews with a Historic Buildings Curator and Preventative Conservator at TTofL (coded using thematic analysis).
- Six R&M project case studies in the Beauchamp Tower (CS1); White Tower (CS2); Bowyer Tower (CS3); Middle Draw-bridge (CS4); Tower Gates (CS5) and Lower Wakefield Tower (CS6).



Interviews

- Tensions exist between curators who prefer a minimal conservative approach and the R&M department who aim to make the site safe and accessible.
- R&M at TTofL is unique because of the site's history of being built and re-built over time.
- TTofL-specific heritage values were identified suggesting that not all heritage and R&M values are universally applicable

R&M project case studies

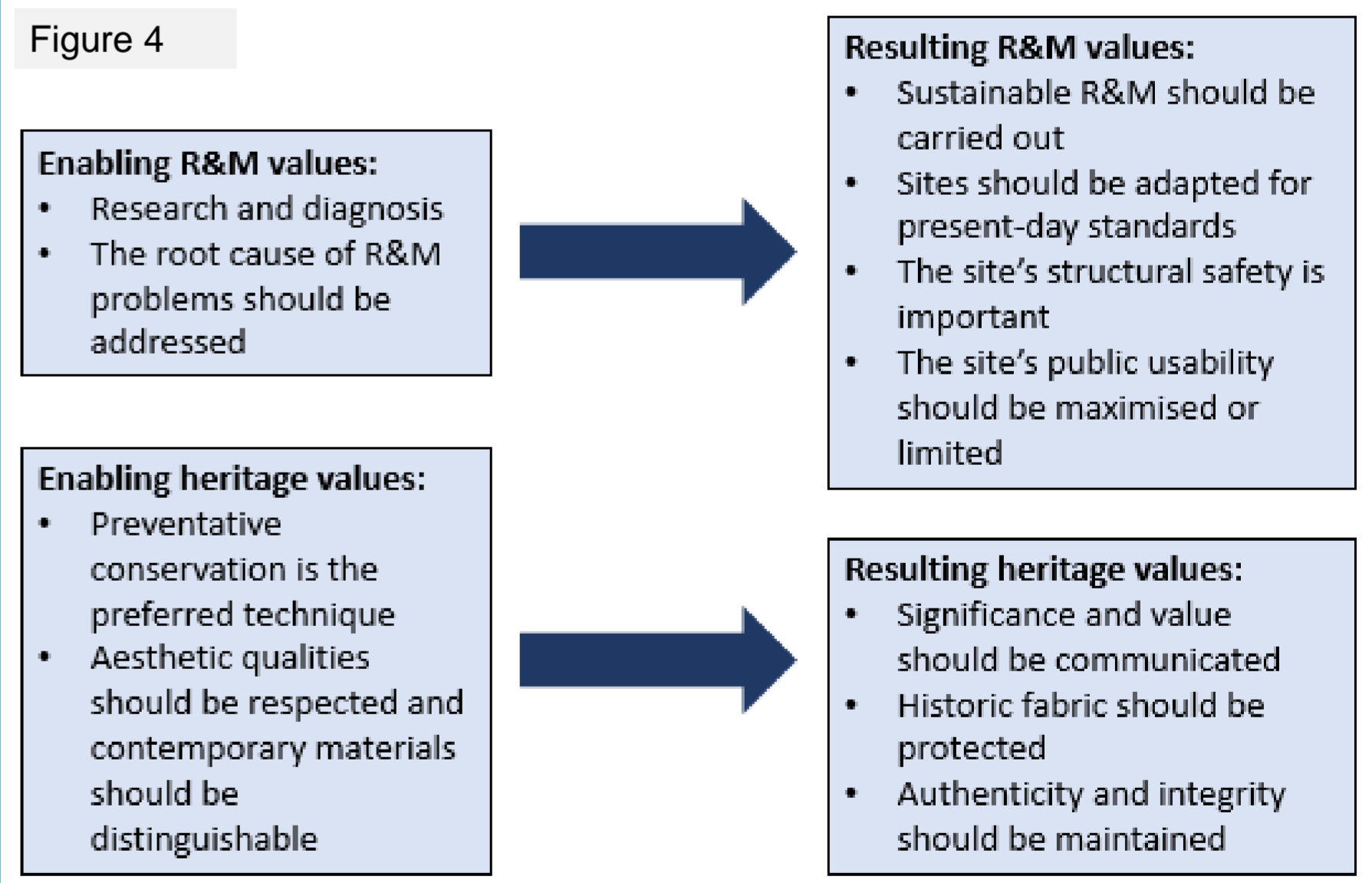
- Scored 1 to 4 based on the extent to which they have fulfilled heritage and R&M values (4= fulfilled; 3= not yet fulfilled; 2= somewhat unfulfilled; 1= unfulfilled).
- CS 2,3,5,6 fulfilled heritage and R&M values through the use of removable infrastructure; stable materials; regular R&M and complex design features.
- CS1 fulfilled heritage values but did not fulfil R&M values.
- CS4 fulfilled R&M values and plans exist to fulfil heritage values.

RESULTS

DISCUSSION

- CS1 scored low for R&M values because of a lack of research and diagnosis before it was carried out.
- A progression of values exists within the R&M of heritage sites where enabling values must be achieved in order to achieve resulting values (figure 4).
- Therefore, research and diagnosis is necessary to achieve other R&M values

Figure 4



CONCLUSION

- The progression of values can be used as a tool by other sites to visualise the process of carrying out R&M.
- Tension mitigation strategies such as those used in the effective case studies can be used as methods through which progression can be carried out.
- Future research should apply these tools to other heritage sites to identify whether the findings are transferable.

Figure 1: Interaction of the heritage value system and R&M value system (adapted from Pearson, Sullivan, 1995; Forsyth, 2013; Slocombe, 2017; Weiler, Gutschow, 2017)
 Figure 2: Map of the Tower of London (Landmarks of the World, 2020)
 Figure 3: Methodological Triangulation
 Figure 4: Progression of enabling R&M and heritage values and resulting R&M and heritage values
References
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